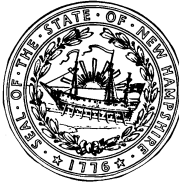


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Date: February 17, 2016

To: Directors and Business Managers of Approved New Hampshire Private Providers of Special Education Services Requesting Department of Education Rates

From: Office of the Commissioner of Education

Division of Educational Improvement
Bureau of Special Education

RE: Rate Setting Submissions for FY'17
(July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017)

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education, is offering guidance in preparing your FY'17 rate setting budget application. Please submit your budget for FY'17 by April 1, 2016, electronically to lisa.morrisette@doe.nh.gov. In the subject line of the e-mail, please indicate *Rate Setting Budget for FY'17*.

The NHDOE only establishes rates for the school/program identified in the current program approval letter. Please submit with the rate setting application a copy of the current program approval letter. When calculating the rate for the school/program, the NHDOE will multiply the current program capacity number identified in the program approval letter by 90%.

Any request for an increase or decrease in program capacity must be requested and approved prior to the rate being established. The NHDOE will not approve requests for program capacity change once the rate setting application has been submitted to the NHDOE.

The guidelines for submitting a rate setting budget proposal:

1. Please submit your budget application based on the needs of your agency in order to continue maintaining compliance and the integrity of the programs at the current level.
 - Items that represent costs for significant changes to the existing programs should be highlighted and supported (any changes to programs must be approved by the Program Approval team) prior to submitting the rate setting budget proposal.
 - All costs, other than for emergency purchases or programmatic changes, will be limited to a maximum of 0.73% increase over the rates set for Fiscal Year 2016, in pursuant with per Ed 1129.12 (b)(4) year to year cost increase requests shall not deviate by more than one percentage point from those costs increases as measured by such price indices as the consumer price index or other similar publications from the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security or United States Department of Labor;

- Salaries of executives shall be recorded in account 601 and shall not exceed a maximum of \$75,000 for the State Fiscal Year (Ed 1129.08(aq)). Please provide copies of the job description for each executive identified in the rate setting budget proposal.
 - Any rate established through the rate setting process shall be the maximum amount that can be charged to a school district, per Ed 1129.09 (f)(g)
 - New school/program seeking special education approval, rates can only be set once the school/program has received a letter stating their special education approval.
2. Requests for additional personnel and/or program changes may be considered only if such requests are the result of a Department of Education finding of noncompliance through the special education monitoring process. The Department of Education will consider this on a case by case basis.
 3. A copy of the most recent independent audit must be included with the budget packet. Rate setting applications will not be reviewed until the audit is received. If the audit is not received by July 1st, the Department of Education will set the rate as the previous year's rate.
 4. Your FY 2016-2017 school calendar must be included with the budget application.
 5. On Form 1129d, inclusive dates are for FY'17 and should include the month, day and year.
 6. Rates will only be established for programs that are identified in the current program approval letter, please use the identified program approval name in the letter when completing the rate computation.
 7. If personnel resigns, are terminated or the position will not be filled, it is the agency's responsibility to inform the Department of Education in order for the established rate to be revised.
 8. Services/Staff costs that are used to establish a tuition rate are not allowed to then charge an additional fee for individual, group or consult services.
 9. During the review process of rate setting the NHDOE may ask for signed copies of personnel contracts.
 10. Copies of all residential licenses must be included. Rates will only be established for programs that are identified in the program approval letter. Rate setting submissions for FY'17, the residential rate for FY'17 will be the same as FY'16. There will be no increase in FY'17 for the residential rate.

The operating budget is your agency's plan for the delivery of services for the upcoming year. Your active participation in the budget process will increase the likelihood of developing the best possible programs for the children of New Hampshire.

The NHDOE will be processing only complete rate setting applications. When incomplete applications are received, the NHDOE will return it to the agency. If an application is received after April 1, 2016, it will be reviewed in the order in which it is received.

If your complete application is not received until July 1st, the NHDOE will set the rate as of the date the review is completed and the rate is established. The school/program shall charge the FY'16 rate until the date the FY'17 rate has been established.

For example:

NHDOE receives the complete rate setting application on August 1, 2016 for a year round program. The NHDOE completes the review and establishes the rates for FY'17 as of August 5, 2016. The school/program will charge the district the FY'16 rate from July 1, 2016 to August 4, 2016. The school/program will charge the district FY'17 rate beginning August 5, 2016.

If a private provider is not submitting a rate application for school year 2016-2017, the private provider will need to submit an audit per Ed 1129.18 before the NHDOE will send them their rate setting letter for school year 2016-2017.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please contact Lisa Morrisette at 271-3738. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

LM:BJD